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ABSTRACT

This volume examines the often tense interplay between the objectives of quality and access in U.S. higher education. Part 1 frames the basic premises of the book regarding the environment in which contemporary colleges and universities operate, the need for integration of quality and access in such an environment, the central role played by access in any commitment to quality, and the central role played by quality in any initiative directed toward increasing access. It refutes the common belief that sees quality and access as either incompatible or at the very least difficult to integrate. Part 2 identifies four prevalent perspectives in American higher education: the elitist perspective, the populist perspective, the beleaguered perspective, and the expedient perspective. Part 3 suggests strategies for achievement and integration of quality and access, and argues for a fifth and new unified perspective on combining quality and access. Under this approach three strategies for integrating quality and access involve creative ways of meeting the needs of diverse student populations, a sustained commitment to both quality and access, and an orientation toward cooperation with other institutions. Other initiatives include assessment, benchmarking, clarification of values, development of professional competencies, empowerment, and feedback as well as leadership and how leaders can influence both quality and access. (Contains 181 references as well as an index.) (JB)

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